



From the French
of le Comte
Alfred de Vigny.

WAS brought up in the village of Montreuil, by the Cure of the place. The happiest period of my life was that time when I was a choir-boy, with plump, rosy cheeks, a clear voice, and fair hair, wearing blouse and cap. As I had given evidence of possessing a musical ear, the good father, who had himself been in former days a notable singer and chorister at Notre Dame, kindly taught me my notes.

"Listen, Mathurin," he said to me one day; "you are only a peasant's son, but you know well your catechism and sol-fa, and, besides, perhaps, if you are good and industrious, you may become a great musician."

This speech filled me with pleasure and pride, and I twanged more frequently and vigorously than ever upon my teacher's shrill and discordant old harp.

The favorite recreation of my leisure hours was to walk to the farther end of the park of Montreuil, and to sit upon the benches there, where the workmen who were building, in the avenue of Versailles, a little music pavilion, by order of the Queen. It was a charming spot.

I used to take with me upon those excursions a little girl of my own age named Pierrette, who, because she had such a pretty voice, was also taught to sing by the Cure. In her hand she would carry a large slice of bread-and-butter, with which her mother, who was the housekeeper, had provided her. Together we watched with great interest the growth of the pretty little house.

Pierrette and I were at that time about 13 years of age. She was already so beautiful that strangers would pause by the way to pay her compliments, and I have seen grand ladies descend from their carriages in order to caress her. "She loved me as a brother,"

From our infancy we had walked always hand-in-hand, and this grew into such a settled habit that in all her life I cannot remember once giving her my arm. Our visits to our favorite spot won for us the friendship of a young stonecutter some eight or 10 years older than ourselves. He was a gentle-natured fellow, sometimes, but not often, military. While he worked we would sit beside him upon a stone or on the ground. He had made a little song about the stones that he cut, in which he said that they were harder than the heart of Pierrette, and he played in a hundred ways upon the words Pierre, Pierrette, Pierrette, and Pierrot. For our endless amusement and delight. For our new friend was a poet. His father had been an architect, but in some way (I know not how) had come to ruin, and it fell to Michel to retrieve the family fortune. With his rule and hammer he supported a mother and two little brothers, and he worked bravely at his stones, making complete all the time; with each large block he would begin a new poem. His full name was Michel Jean Sedaine.

II.

My parents had never known, for they had died in my infancy, both about the same time, of the small-pox. But the Cure had been a good father to me. At the age of 16 I was wild and foolish, but I knew a little Latin and much about music, and was, moreover, a fairly skillful gardener. My life was a very happy one, for it was passed at the side of Pierrette. One day, as I was engaged in lopping off the branches of one of the beeches in the park and tying them together into a small bundle, Pierrette suddenly exclaimed:

"Look at those ladies coming towards us through the alley! What can they be going to do?"

Looking in the direction she indicated, I saw two young women, who were walking at a rapid pace over the dead leaves. One, who was a trifle taller than the other, wore a gown of rose-colored silk. She ran rather than walked, and her companion kept just a little behind. Like the poor peasant lad I was, I was seized with a kind of instinctive panic, and said to Pierrette:

"Let us hide ourselves!"

But for that there was now no time, and my terror was redoubled when I saw the rose-colored lady making signs to my blushing Pierrette, who remained as if rooted to the spot, grasping my hand tightly. I pulled off my cap, and stood leaning against the tree.

This lady came straight up to Pierrette, and, touching her under the chin, as if to show her to her friend, said:

"Was I not right? Is this not the very thing for my milkmaid's costume on Thursday? What a pretty little girl it is! My child, will you give all your clothes, just as they are now, to the servants under my wing, I will send for them? I will send you mine in exchange."

"Oh, madame!" was all that Pierrette could say.

The other young lady now came forward, and, laying her hand upon Pierrette's bare arm, encouraged her with gentle words, telling her that this lady was one whom everybody obeyed. Then Madame Rose-color spoke again:

"Believe me, you are unwise."

"Be sure that you are nothing in your costume, little one," said she, shaking at the girl her dainty Malacca cane. "See! Here is a handsome fellow who will be a soldier, and a handsome fellow will marry you."

So beautiful was she that I almost went on my knees to her. She had the appearance of a little, good fairy.

She talked fast and gaily. Bestowing a playful pat upon Pierrette's cheek, she turned and tripped away, followed by her companion. Hand-in-hand, according to our custom, we returned home, in silence, but with happy hearts.

I went straight to the Cure, and said to him: "Madame the Cure, I wish to be a soldier."

The good man was astounded.

"How is it, my dear child," said he, "that you desire to leave me? Do you no longer love me? Do you no longer love Pierrette? What have we done to you that you have grown tired of us? And is all the education I have given you to be thrown away? Answer, you naughty boy!"

"I wish to be a soldier,"

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At this moment appeared two tall, powdered lackeys and a lady's-maid, who inquired whether the little girl had got ready the costume asked for by the Queen and the Princess de Lamballe.

When these visitors had gone, and the commotion they caused had subsided, I was left alone with the Cure, Pierrette and her mother having withdrawn in great excitement to "try on" the contents of the box which the Queen had sent in exchange for the little girl's frock and cap.

My guardian then requested me to relate to him the occurrences of the morning, which I did, somewhat more briefly than I have told them here.

"And it is for this you would leave us, my son?" said my old friend, when I had ended my recital, holding my hands in his. For a long time he looked earnestly at me, setting forth the numerous hardships, perils, and temptations of a soldier's life, which, said he, would unfit me for becoming the husband of such a good, pure little being as Pierrette.

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teach you, and all that we ask in return for our pains is that, for one hour every day, you will sit for Madame. You will not consider that any great hardship?"

Pierrette was so much more than satisfied with the bargain that she could have embraced the Queen in the exuberance of her gratitude. As she was posing for Madame de Lamballe, two men entered the room. One was stout, the other tall. At sight of the tall one she exclaimed: "Why! it is!" — then stopped herself.

"Well, gentlemen," said Marie Antoinette, "what do you think of her? Was I not right?"

"It is Rose herself!" replied Sedaine.

"A single note, madame," said the other, M. Grevey, "and I shall know if she is as perfectly Monsigny's Rose as she is Sedaine's!"

Then, turning to Pierrette, he said to her: "Sing the scale after me thus: Ut, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol."

The girl repeated his notes.

"She has a divine voice, madame," was his verdict.

The Queen clapped her hands and jumped for joy, as she exclaimed:

"She will gain her dot!"

III.

Of all these gay proceedings I, of course, was ignorant. Ever since Michel's visit I had felt very wretched. I had no further tidings of my friends at Montreuil, and began to think that Pierrette must have quite forgotten me. The regiment remained at Orleans three months, and I had a bad fit of homesickness which affected my physical health.

One day, in the street, an officer of our company called me to him, and pointing to a huge play-bill, said:

"Read that, Mathurin."

"By order."

"On Monday next will be given a special performance of 'Irene,' the new work of M. de Voltaire, to be followed by 'Rose and Colas,' an opera by M. Sedaine and M. de Monsigny, for the benefit of Mademoiselle Colombe, of the Comedie Italienne, who will appear in the second piece. Her Majesty the Queen has graciously promised to be present."

"What has that to do with me, my Captain?" inquired I.

"You are a good-looking fellow," said the officer. "I will get you a good seat and frizzle out a bit, and station you at the door of the Royal box."

Thus it came to pass that the night of the performance found me in the theater, resplendent in full uniform, standing upon a blue carpet, and surrounded on all sides by flowers and festoons.

While awaiting the Queen's arrival, I overheard a conversation between M. de Grevey and the manager of the theater. The latter seemed anxious concerning the qualifications of Mademoiselle Colombe, who, apparently, was

blue-frock, her white peticote, her pretty simple manner, her small shoes with the silver buckles, and her hair in a fine house, she was several men-servants, and goes about in Paris dressed like a duchess, and she is exactly like Pierrette! But my poor little girl could not sing so well, although her voice may be quite as pretty."

"There is no doubt, madame," said the Princess de Lamballe, "that your good deed is a complete success. Everyone is here. See, all the good townsfolk of Orleans are enchanted with this splendid singer, and the whole court is ready to applaud her."

She gave the signal for applause, and the audience, who, according to custom, had hitherto remained silent out of respect for the Queen, gave full vent to their enthusiasm. From that moment scarcely a word of Rose's was allowed to pass without tremendous clapping. The Queen was delighted.

At the end of the piece the ladies threw their bouquets to Rose.

"Where is the real lover?" inquired the Queen of the Duc de Lauzun, who thereupon left the box, and beckoned to my Captain in the corridor.

Again the nervous trembling seized me, for I felt that something—I could not guess what—was about to happen to me.

My Captain bowed respectfully, and conversed in a low tone with M. de Lauzun. Marie Antoinette was looking at me! I leaped against the wall to keep myself from falling. There were footsteps upon the staircase, and I saw Michel Sedaine, followed by Grevey and the podgy and pompous manager; and they were bringing Pierrette, the real Pierrette, my Pierrette, to me—my sister, my wife, my Pierrette of Montreuil!

The manager was exclaiming joyfully:

"Here is a good night's work! Eighteen thousand francs!"

The Queen now came forward, and, taking Pierrette's hand, said in her gay, kindly manner:

"You see, my child, there was no other way in which you could honorably earn your dot in a single hour. To-morrow I shall take you back to the Cure of Montreuil, who will, I trust, absolve us both. He will forgive you for playing in a comedy once in your life."

Here the Queen, with a gracious bow, turned me. To poor Michel, standing meekly in the wings, I hope, said she, "that M. Mathurin will design to accept Pierrette's fortune. I have added nothing to it; she has earned it all herself!" — *Standard Magazine*, by courtesy of International News Company.

ARMY OF THE POTOMAC.

The Annual Meeting of the Association at Boston was Very Successful.

Welcomed by a salute from the guns of Light Battery A, the members of the Society of the Army of the Potomac gathered in Convention at Faneuil Hall, Boston, Mass., June 27. The meeting was opened by Gen. Horace Porter.

In opening the proceedings of the 24th anniversary, Gen. Porter returned for the kindliness of the Society, and for the cordiality in accepting me as your president officer, I shall certainly not at this time inflict upon you any extended remarks. I am set down to say a few words. I can only congratulate you all on the evening, and so I will extend my remarks now, I should be like the woman in the play; there would be too much of me in the coming year. I can only congratulate you all on the success of this Convention, as I know it will be a success from what I know of the arrangements of the Boston committee, and from what I can see of the large attendance present."

The reports of the Secretary and Treasurer were then read and approved. The Treasurer reported a surplus of \$1,332.77.

When the question of selecting a place for the holding of the next annual meeting came up, the Secretary read a communication from the Mayor of Fredericksburg, Va., containing a very cordial invitation to visit that place next season. The City Council directed the Mayor to send the invitation. The reading of the invitation was warmly applauded. A motion was made to accept the invitation, but under the rules of the Society a committee must be appointed to bring in a list of at least three places, the choice to be made by ballot in the Convention. Concord, N. H., New London, Conn., and Saratoga, N. Y., were suggested by members as appropriate places for holding the next Reunion.

The Secretary of the Society had sent out a circular suggesting that it would be a good thing to elect a committee to become life members at an expense of \$25. When action was taken on this proposition it was the general opinion that the amount had been set too high. It was finally fixed at \$10.

Resolutions were adopted thanking the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the City of Boston for favors and kindnesses extended to the Society.

Gen. Porter called for nominations for President for the ensuing year, and the First, Second, Third, Fifth, Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, Twelfth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth Corps nominated Gen. Nelson A. Miles, U. S. Army. The Fourth Corps nominated Col. Wm. Moore, of Walpole, Mass., and the Sixth Gen. Calvin E. Pratt. The names of Col. Moore and Gen. Pratt were subsequently withdrawn in favor of Gen. Miles, who was then unanimously elected.

Gen. H. C. Kind, Gen. Samuel Truesdel, and Gen. George H. Sharpe were re-elected Secretary, Treasurer, and Corresponding Secretary, respectively.

The committee to report places for holding the next Reunion reported in favor of Concord, New London, and Saratoga. Concord was unanimously selected, after the action of the other places had withdrawn them from consideration. A vote of thanks was passed for the courtesy of the authorities of the city of Fredericksburg.

The desecration of the Gettysburg battlefield by a trolley road was brought up before the meeting. Resolutions were introduced denouncing the movement, and the speech of one member of the society called attention to the fact that the railroad runs on private property, and that no amount of resolutions would be effective in changing the condition of affairs. The speaker urged that the society should petition and request Congress to purchase the property and make it a Government park. This was done, and the resolution was presented also to the next meeting of Congress.

Gen. Miles took the chair and was called upon for a speech. He stated that it was a new experience for him to be a candidate for an office, and he greatly appreciated the confidence reposed in him. It was in that historic hall that he first learned the ideas of patriotism and devotion to his country. At the conclusion of his address he was given three cheers, after which the meeting dissolved for pleasure trips.

Previous to the general meeting of the society the annual meetings of the different corps were held in the afternoon in the upper hall, kindly loaned by the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company. The following are the results of the elections:

First Corps—Capt. G. F. Stein, President; Capt. P. Delacy, J. F. Chase, Wm. A. Rogers, S. H. Leonard and Jacob F. Stagi, Vice-presidents; Capt. O. E. Vaughn, Treasurer; Maj. George W. Smith, Corresponding Secretary; Maj. C. E. Campbell, Recording Secretary.

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Fifth Corps—President, Gen. Fitz-John Porter; Vice-President, Army of Potomac, Wm. H. Mills; Vice-President, Gen. Chas. S. Pearson, Maj. Fred Simonds, Executive Committee, Capt. L. N. Tucker, Capt. J. C. White, Private Secretary; Secretary and Treasurer, Col. A. M. Clark.

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Pope, Vice-President of Army of Potomac; Maj. Dudley, Secretary and Treasurer.

Tenth Corps—President, Col. George Benton Dyer, 8th Me. Cav.; also Vice-President Army of Potomac; Secretary, Adj. J. E. Shepard, of Lawrence; Treasurer, Maj. W. P. Shreve, of Boston; Historian, Col. J. D. Drew, 4th N. H. Eleventh Corps—President, Gen. Orland Smith, Baltimore; Vice-President, Lieut. Col. A. C. Hamlin, Bangor.

Twelfth Corps—President, J. W. Delery, 2d Mass., also chosen Vice-President Army of Potomac; Secretary and Treasurer, Dr. John J. H. Love, 13th N. J.

GEN. NELSON A. MILES.

Thirteenth Corps—No election. Officers chosen in New York in February.

Cavalry Association—President, Gen. J. P. Cilley, 1st Me. Cav.; First Vice-President, Maj. C. G. Davis, 1st Mass. Cav.; Second Vice-President, Maj. A. G. P. Brown, 24th N. Y. Cav.; Third Vice-President, Col. E. G. Lombard, 6th Ohio Cav.; Fourth Vice-President, Col. Floyd Clarkson, 12th N. Y. Cav.; Fifth Vice-President, Dr. P. O'Meara, Edson, 1st Vt. Cav.; Vice-President Army of Potomac, Gen. T. E. Chamberlain, 1st Mass. Cav.; Treasurer, Maj. I. G. Whithead, 6th Pa. Cav.; Secretary, Gen. L. G. Estes, A. A.